



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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FCC EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY FOR CABLE TELEVISION RELAY SERVICE TO ALL MULTICHANNEL VIDEO PROGRAMMING DISTRIBUTORS

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a Report and Order that expanded eligibility for licenses in the Cable Television Relay Service (CARS) to all Multichannel Video Programming Distributors. Now, Private Cable Operators (PCOs), Direct Broadcast Satellite Operators (DBS), Open Video Systems (OVS), and others who provide multiple channels of video programming can join Cable Television Systems and Wireless Cable Systems (MDS, MMDS) in using CARS microwave frequencies to support their video programming distribution.

Today's action will enhance opportunities for additional competition to incumbent cable operators. It will increase the number of frequencies available to more MVPDs and treat all MVPDs equally for access to microwave frequencies. Thus, all MVPDs will have the opportunity to use CARS frequencies to support their delivery of video services in a balanced competitive environment.

While the Commission reaffirmed that the predominant use of CARS should be video transmission, it also reserved the opportunity to examine in other proceedings the flexible use of the CARS bands and the expansion of eligibility for these frequencies.

Franchised cable systems and other eligible services use the 12 GHz and 18 GHz CARS bands for microwave relays pursuant to Part 78 of the Commission's Rules. CARS is principally a video transmission service used for intermediate links in a distribution network. CARS stations relay signals for and supply program material to cable television systems and other eligible entities using point-to-point and point-to-multipoint transmissions. These relay stations enable cable systems and other CARS licensees to transmit television broadcast and low power television and related audio signals, AM and FM broadcast stations, and cablecasting from one point (*e.g.*, on one side of a river or mountain) to another point (*e.g.*, the other side of the river or mountain) or many points ("multipoint") via microwave.

Action by the Commission May 16, 2002, by Report and Order (FCC 02-149). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps and Martin.

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